

heard Him whisper to me that He
my prayers and would answer
"Bless your trusting little heart,
and a great comfort to me. Midge,
he more replied. "But for
sweet, cherishing words I would give up
all hope of an angel papa. We have
to look to in our troubles,
and we must not lose our
faith in the dear Saviour whose birth
will be celebrated all over the world
to-morrow."
"O, mamma, is to-morrow Christmas?"
The little one had looked up with a
quick, hopeful glance, then she

checked the speech upon her lips a shade of pain swept over her face and her eyes drooped. The mother caught the changing expression on the little one's features, and her heart swelled almost to bursting, as the tears came anew into her swollen eyes.

"O, mamma, don't—please don't," Midget pleaded. "I don't care about Santa Claus and won't hang up a single stocking, for I know he would never come to hunt me in this far-away place. He will look for me back at home, and, when he finds I am gone, will give my presents to some little poor girl."

"Yes, you do care, Midget, darling, but in your brave little soul you try to hide your disappointment that it may not grieve mamma. No, darling, I fear good Santa Claus will not find you this time, as he has done every other Christmas since your birth, and it breaks my heart to think you must be so neglected."

"Don't you mind it a bit, mamma, for I just ain't going to care. If you will only smile and look happy like you used to, it will please me more than anything good old Santa could bring me in his great pack."

The mother drew the little one to her bosom and kissed her fondly, as she started when a deep sigh, which Midget tried in vain to repress, escaped from the baby's breast. Her face wore a look of desperate resolution as she released her loved one and said:

"Midget, darling, you will hang up your stockings and let me know if you have always done, and good Santa Claus may come here when he visits the few children in this dreary town. I somehow feel that he will do so, and when you go to bed to-night you must ask God in your prayers to tell the good children's friend where you are. He may find you, darling, but if he does not you must not grieve too greatly over it. Mamma is going out for a little while, and you must stay close to the stove and try to keep warm until she gets back. I will go to the post office, and I may hear from the Denver manager to whom I wrote for an engagement. Good-by, baby, and try to think that Santa Claus may find you, even in this cheerless place."

If the thin muslin wall which separated her room from the adjoining one had vanished Mrs. Maynard would have seen sitting near it a great, big, rough miner, with tears sparkling like diamonds in his honest eyes. She did not know that, as she left her room, "Big John" Rogers, as he was known, quietly arose and followed her from the house and waded after her through the deep snow in the street.

He saw her enter the post office, and a few minutes later came forth again with a look of distress and disappointment on her face. She raised her eyes to look about her, and he noticed that they were full of tears, but, when just across the street, they encountered three gilded balls. Her face brightened and she seemed about to turn toward them. Then a cloud of pain swept over her features and she stood with

"How much did you let her have on it?"

"Two dollars. I told her she could have five, but she didn't would take it. She said she might not be able to raise so much to redeem it."

"Now look here, Sol, you know me, an' you know I wouldn't do anything that's crooked," John said. "I'll give you ten dollars for the ring, an' I'll promise you that the woman will wear it in its old place on her finger to-morrow."

"Oh, my gracious, Shon, I couldn't do dat. De ring is a pledge and I was responsible for it, and I don't own der ring. I got to be a body wud be owner. Do you know de lady, Shon?"

The miner reflected for a moment, and then in his old blunt way told the man what he had heard through the canvas partition. His strough voice grew soft and mellow as he repeated the little one's words, and a tear stole down his bronzed cheek as he told of the mother's grief and of her resolution that her baby should not be deprived of her Christmas pleasures. Then he detailed his plans, and concluded by saying:

"Sandy Claws is on that little 'un trail, Sol, an' he's a goin' to run onto der camp in great shape, an' to-morrow mornin' when she wakes up der ring ought to be among de stuff she finds in her stockin's."

"Holy Moses, Shon, dat was a gray horse mit some more colors. Dat was different, and you baed your lifetime dat ring will be dere, and you don't pay me ven cent, too. That two dollar will be my chip in mit the poya. Und see here, Shon, der's a leetle beautiful ladies' gold watch that I brought here from Denver mit my first stock of goods and it's so small dat nobody won't buy it in dis camp, und das goes for a taun's worth of der little Christmas, too. Und say, Shon, ven you see all de boys und you don't got enough yust bring me a shnow ball and I'll lend you ten dollar on it und put Santa Claus' name on de ticket. I don't was a Skylock ven I was a Shew, und don't you remember it, Shon?"

With the ring in his purse, the ring placed on the woman's finger when at the altar she took the name of the dear one whom she mourned, John started on a tour of the saloons and gambling houses of the camp. Quietly he told the story to the listening groups. "A woman in distress!" That was enough for the generous warm-hearted miners congregated in the various places, and the canvas bag John carried grew more and more corpulent in proportions as he went his rounds. Gold, silver and greenbacks came into the fund from willing hands, and when at nine that night the tour was completed, the bag seemed almost bursting with its load of treasure. Returning to the hotel with a few companions the miner had a consultation with the landlord, which concluded with the latter saying, bluntly:

"Yes, take a knife an' slit the ornerly thing. I kin have a piece sewed over de hole."



During the early hours of the night men moved softly about the hotel office whispering mysteriously, or sat near the stove discussing some matter in low tones. The landlord's wife had gone to the lady's room, ostensibly for a womanly chat, but really on a mission at John's request, and when, an hour later, she silently glided into the office a score of rough miners surrounded her.

"She is just going to bed," the woman said. "The poor creature is tired and all worn out, and I induced her to take a small dose of laudanum. She will sleep like a top. The little girl is sleeping soundly, and I assisted the mother to place the few cheap presents she had purchased in the little stockings hanging on the back of a chair near the bed. The woman took her off just before I came away, and they are lying on her shoes near the foot of the bed."

Along after midnight, had not Mrs. Maynard been securely locked in the arms of opiate-induced sleep, some very mysterious transactions would have met her eyes. She would have seen honest old John's bewhiskered face at the opening, thus made, his head cautiously enter, and his keen eyes peer around in the dim light which came through the window from the winter moon. Then she would have seen his burly form come noisily through the opening, move cautiously to a chair and remove therefrom the tiny, present-laden stockings. She would have seen the great form stoop and would have heard the searching fingers moving over the floor, and then have seen the miner assume a half-stooping attitude, and face at the opening, the baby stockings in one hand and a pair of much larger dimensions in the other. But she sweetly slept on, unconscious that her room had been invaded by a warm-hearted representative of Santa Claus.

"O, mamma, mamma, wake up, I want to tell you something."

The widow started from her sleep. "I had such a funny dream, mamma."

The little one said, "I dreamed Santa Claus was in here, but he didn't look bit like our old Santa. He was a big man with long black hair, and he came to the bed and looked at me so pitiful. I could

sleeped at all. He looked at you a little while and then, as me, and I dreamed I shut my eyes real quick, to make believe I was asleep. He leaned away over you and kissed me just as easy as could be, and whispered 'God bless you, dear,' and then when I opened my eyes again he was gone. Wasn't it funny?"

The mother smiled at the queer remark, little dreaming that what Midget believed to be a vision of the night had been a reality.

"If he was really here, darling," she said, "he was no doubt hunting you, and may have left you something. Jump up and look at your stockings." The little one needed no second bidding. She was on the cold floor in a moment, and through the gray light of the early dawn the mother watched her.

"O, mamma! Mamma!"

A smile of pleasure came over the mother's face at the cry of delight. Every pang it had cost her to give up the ring she so prized was softened by the happiness which clung to her darling's tones.

"O, mamma!"

"Well, what did you get, baby?"

"A watch, a real gold watch, a little teenie watch, and it's running."

"A what, Midget? Why, child, is your brain trued? Santa Claus never brings gold watches to poor children."

"Oh, he did, mamma, he did, he did, and there's something in your stockings, too."

"In my stockings? Why, my darling, are you crazy?"

"No, mamma, it's a real watch, and it is ticking. Just look."

She ran to the bed with the treasure in her hand. The mother took the tiny time-piece, and her eyes opened wide with wonder when she found that Midget's words were true.

"Here are your stockings, mamma, and I'll make you see how I can hardly carry them. I just believe I did see Santa Claus, and wasn't dreaming at all."

The mother reached for the stockings, and when she felt the weight and it flashed across her mind that they were freighted with money, she took them off in an instant. She poured the treasure out on the bed. Gold, silver and greenbacks, wealth she had never dreamed she would possess, and in the shining heap lay her wedding-ring, with a note attached. Opening the paper, she read:

"My friend, when you think sandy Claws forgits peepe, thats in trouble, You or off yure base, for He nose his biz, and sodus Big John, even if he doant want you to no He done This, and i rite it an Slip it in unbeneone to Him, for He herd you and yure babby sayed to me you ruble, an the boys told me this too. Big John is the only sandy Claws in This Here camp. Yures, The proprier."

Scarcely knowing whether she was waking or dreaming, the woman hastily arose and dressed herself, and taking the little girl by the hand went to the hotel office. At that moment they entered Midget cried out:

"Oh, mamma, there's the Santa Claus I saw in my dream! That large gentleman with the whiskers. Wasn't it you, sir?"

The big fellow attempted to run into the street, but the landlord caught him in an instant. He blushed like a schoolgirl as he faced the wondering woman, and blurted out:

"Ma'am, don't mention it, if you please. Me an' the boys found out you was in trouble, an' we just got together and took this out as Christians had ought to do."

"It's just like this, ma'am," the landlord said. "John, 'yar, is a big, bashful feller when thars a woman in sight, an' he made us all swar we wouldn't never let you know whar the life came from. It's all right, ma'am, and you kin back up on 'em. I've friends jest as soon as you want to, an' in a year you'll forgit you ever had a bit o' trouble in yer life. We're all only too happy to make you a merry Christmas, ma'am, and we all hope you may have many more of 'em."

"O, you kin back up on 'em for me for this," she said, addressing John.

"It was indeed a grand trouble, and—"

But he had escaped from the door and ran blushing down the street. Later in the day he met Mrs. Maynard and conquered his modesty enough to tell her of the conversation with her. It was observed, too, that he assisted her on the stage when she smilingly bade adieu to the camp, and waved his hat enthusiastically as the driver's whip cracked and the vehicle bowed away.

Two months later at their old home in the east, Midget said to a little playfellow:

"I'm going to have a new papa pretty soon."

"Who?" her companion asked.

"Big John Santa Claus. I don't know his other name yet."

CAPT. JACK CRAWFORD.

Tom's View of It.

Now, what do you guess? But you could not guess.

What Santa Claus did last night: He filled our stockings up to the brim, Packing them hard and tight; And the next morn'g would you believe?— He hung a Christmas tree And plant it thick with beautiful things For Tommy and Ruth and me.

Tops and trumpets and drum and sled, Harbies and bat and ball, A shining lock and picture books, And a curly-haired, brown-eyed doll; And you kin back up on 'em for me, If you had been there to see All the treasures that Christmas brought For Tommy and Ruth and me.

Tommy gazed, with a sober face, And lifted his head to say: "There's plenty of boys and girls, I know. Who haven't a gift to-day? Why did he bring so much to us? There's more than enough for three; It isn't fair that so much should be For Polly and Ruth and me."

"Tis easy guessing. The dear old saint Has piled up his treasures here To give to three as glorious three To share in Christmas cheer: So, with loving hearts and open hands, Tell us our best to see How quickly we can divide them all— Polly and Ruth and me."

—Golden Days.

A Possible Explanation.

Dimples (examining her new Christmas doll)—Buddy, how do you s'pose Santa Claus got pieces just like mamma's wrapper to make dollie's dress?

Buddy—I don't know 'less maybe Mrs. Santa Claus says mamma's—

Mamma's Young People.

—In view of the application of the trolley to canal traffic, it is interesting to recall what improvements were attempted on passenger transportation on American canals before railways seized this part of the business. Seth C. Jones, of Syracuse, built about sixty years ago an improved canal packet, designed to run from Syracuse to Buffalo, a distance of ninety-five miles, between breakfast and supper. The boat was drawn by horses, and on her trial trip, with forty or fifty passengers, she made nearly twelve miles an hour. It was asserted that going at this speed she created smaller waves and did less damage to the banks than other boats going at ordinary canal speed.

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JOHN SEBASTIAN, G. P. A., Chicago.
TO (chemist)—"Got any codliver oil?" Chemist—"Certainly." Patient—"Is it fresh?" Chemist—"Come, now, do you suppose we are in the habit of killing a wily Wednesday country yokel, who wants to buy two penn'orth of codliver oil?"—Meg-gendorfers Blatter.

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The pleasant flavor, gentle action and soothing effect of Syrup of Figs, when in need of a laxative, and if the father or mother be suffering, the most gratifying results follow its use; so that it is the best family remedy known and every family should have a bottle.

COURTESY—"When you proposed to Miss Dexter did you get down on your knees?" Shirley—"Fair to couldn't; it was sitting on the floor."—Truth.

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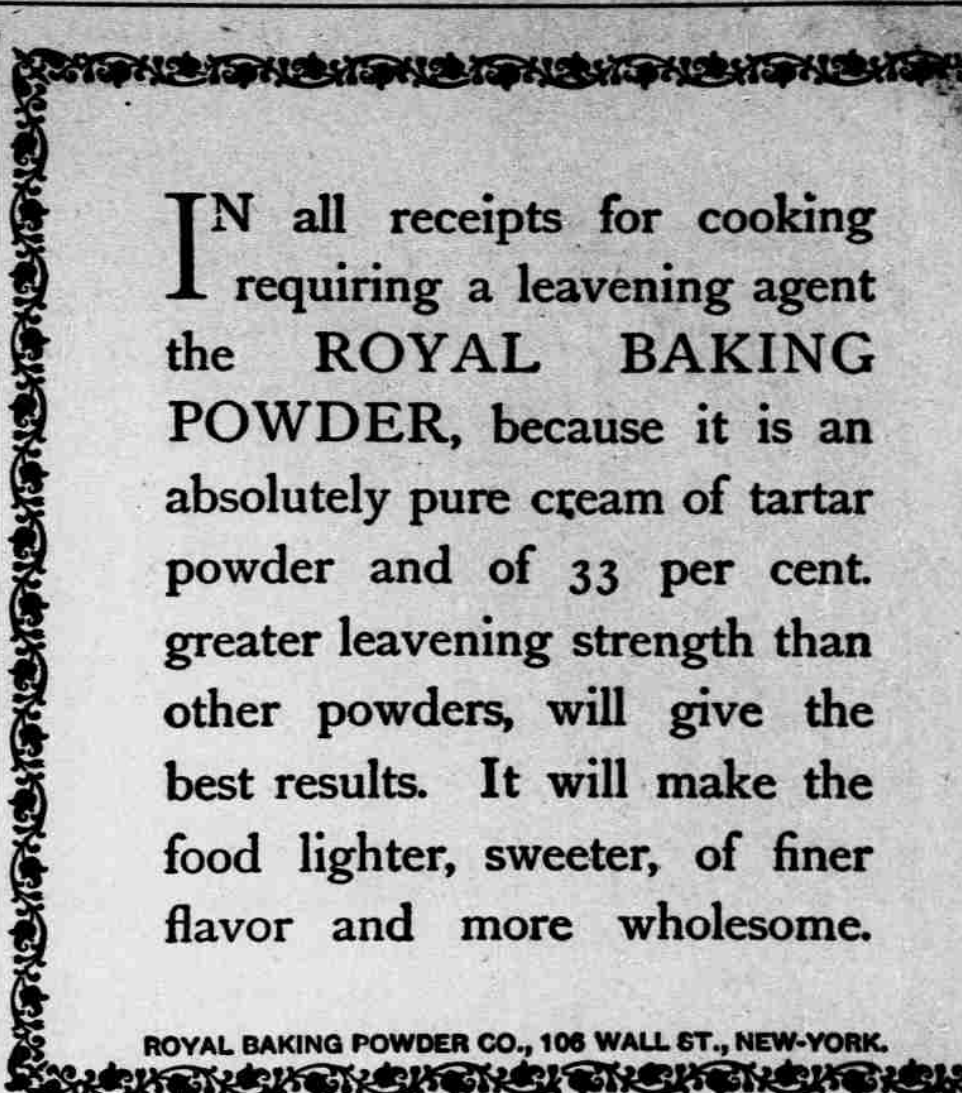
THE MARKETS.
NEW YORK, DEC. 17, 1894.
CATTLE—Native Steers..... 8 35 00 5 10
CATTLE—Middling..... 6 50 00 5 54
SHEEP—Fair to Choice..... 3 15 00 3 15
WHEAT—No. 2 Red..... 50 1/2 00 51 1/2
Barley—Fair to Good..... 2 00 00 2 00
OATS—No. 2..... 31 1/4 00 32 1/4
PORK—New Mess..... 13 25 00 14 00
COTTON—Middling..... 5 54 00 5 54
BEEVES—Fair to Choice Steers..... 5 50 00 5 50
Medium..... 4 41 00 5 00
FLOUR—Fair to Select..... 4 15 00 4 65
Syrup—Choice Light..... 3 70 00 3 70
HOGS—Patents..... 2 53 00 2 60
WHEAT—Fancy to Extra do..... 2 05 00 2 05
CORN—No. 2 Mixed..... 60 00 60 1/2
Barley—Fair to Good..... 2 00 00 2 00
RYE—No. 2..... 52 1/2 00 54 1/2
TOBACCO—Leaf..... 10 00 10 00
Lard—Barley..... 7 00 10 00
HAY—Clear Timothy..... 9 00 11 75
Butter—Choice..... 12 50 18 00
EGGS—Fresh..... 12 12 37 1/2
Syrup—Choice Light Mess (New)..... 15 12 12 37 1/2
BACON—Clear Rib..... 12 00 12 00
LARD—Prime Steam..... 6 00 6 00
CATTLE—Shipping..... 4 25 00 6 45
HOGS—Fair to Choice..... 4 25 00 6 05
SHEEP—Fair to Choice..... 3 15 00 3 15
FLOUR—Winter Patents..... 2 50 00 2 81
Barley—Fair to Good..... 2 00 00 2 00
WHEAT—No. 2 Spring..... 50 1/2 00 51 1/2
CORN—No. 2 Red..... 51 1/2 00 54 1/2
OATS—No. 2..... 31 1/4 00 32 1/4
PORK—Mess (New)..... 11 87 1/2 12 10
KANSAS CITY.
CATTLE—Shipping Steers..... 3 25 00 5 25
CORN—No. 2..... 4 00 00 4 00
WHEAT—No. 2 Red..... 3 15 00 3 15
OATS—No. 2..... 31 00 31 00
NEW ORLEANS.
FLOUR—High Grade..... 2 50 00 3 00
CORN—No. 2..... 50 00 50 00
OATS—Western..... 16 00 16 00
PORK—New Mess..... 62 12 75
BACON—Sides..... 62 7 1/2
LOUISVILLE.
WHEAT—No. 2 Red..... 54 00 55 00
CORN—No. 2..... 32 1/2 00 33 1/2
OATS—No. 2 Mixed..... 32 1/2 00 33 1/2
Barley—Fair to Good..... 12 25 12 75
BACON—Clear Rib..... 7 1/2 00 7 1/2
CATTLE—Middling..... 6 00 6 00

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"Good afternoon, Mrs. Northside," said the caller, rising to his feet as the mistress of the house entered the parlor. "Oh, Mr. Birmingham," replied the lady, "why didn't you send up your name! The maid said a gentleman asked to see me, and here it is only you!"—Pittsburgh Chronicle-Telegraph.

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"I set four pies out on the window sill to cool," said Mrs. Hunker to her husband, "and they have all been stolen." "Then we must number them among the lost rats," was the philosophical reply.

I CAN recommend **Piso's Cure** for Consumption to sufferers from Asthma.—E. D. TOWNSSEND, Ft. Howard, Wis., May 4, '94.

JANITOR of Skyflats (gruffly).—"What are you doing in the vestibule at this time of night? You're one of the tenants!" Tom De Witt.—"No, I'm not! So you'd better be civil or I'll break your head."—Life.


CURE your cough with **Hale's Honey of Horehound and Tar**.

Pike's Toothache Drops Cure in one minute.

HEAVEN and earth fight in vain against a dunce.—Schiller.

TWO MENAGERIES recently arrived Bologna, one of which was under the management of Signor B., and the other that of his wife, traveling respectively their own account. Here they decided to join their forces, and the fact was announced on the bill as follows: "Over the arrival of my wife, my collection of wild animals is considerably augmented."—Conversations.

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OF PAINS RHEUMATIC, NEURALGIC, LUMBAGIC AND SCIATIC.

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 does what nothing else
 can. It saves labor in washing,
 insures safety to whites
 is washed. It is cheap,
 thorough and reliable. No
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 just as well to have nothing else.

Beware
 Peddlers and some unscrupulous grocers
 tell you "this is as good as" or "the same
 as *Pearline*." IT'S FALSE—*Pearline*
 never peddled, and if your grocer sends you something in place of *Pearline*
 do the honest thing—*send it back.*

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